

Remarks/Arguments

In the September 9, 2004 office action, claims 11, 12, 15 and 18 were rejected under section 102(b) as being anticipated by US Patent No. 3,177,638 to Johnson. Claims 19, 20 and 22 were rejected under section 102(b) as being anticipated by US Patent No. 1,263,209 to Coldwell. Claims 1, 2 and 10 were rejected under section 103(a) as being unpatentable over US Patent No. 3,410,063 to Speiser. Claim 3 was rejected under section 103(a) as being unpatentable over Speiser in view of US Patent No. 6,336,312 to Bednar et al. Claims 4-6 were rejected under section 103(a) as being unpatentable over Speiser in view of Coldwell. Claims 7 and 9 were rejected under section 103(a) as being unpatentable over Speiser in view of US Patent No. 6,101,794 to Christopherson et al. Claim 8 was rejected under section 103(a) as being unpatentable over Speiser in view of US Patent No. 1,957,079 to Ronning. Claim 13 was rejected under section 103(a) as being unpatentable over Johnson in view of US Patent No. 1,330,293 to Worthington. Claim 14 was rejected under section 103(a) as being unpatentable over Johnson in view of Ronning. Claim 16 was rejected under section 103(a) as being unpatentable over Johnson in view of US Patent No. 4,341,059 to Gerzanich. Claim 17 was rejected under section 103(a) as being unpatentable over Johnson in view of Speiser. Claim 21 was rejected under section 103(a) as being unpatentable over Coldwell in view of Christopherson.

In response to the office action, claims 1, 11 and 19 are amended. Claim 21 is cancelled.

Claim 1 is amended to specify the pair of rear wheels have a track width greater than that of the pair of front wheels; a first row of two cutting units is in front of the pair of front wheels; a second row of three cutting units is behind the pair of front wheels; and two cutting units in the second row are movable to a transport position inside the track width of the pair of rear wheels.

Claim 1 is patentable over Speiser. Speiser fails to show a pair of rear wheels having a track width greater than that of the pair of front wheels. Speiser fails to show a second row of three cutting units behind the pair of front wheels. Speiser fails to show two cutting units in the second row movable to a transport position

inside the track width of the pair of rear wheels. Instead, Speiser shows one rear wheel 130, and one cutting unit 202 in a second row under frame member 103. As shown in Fig. 11 of Speiser, cutting units 200, 201 in a transport position extend outside the track width of rear wheel 130, as well as front wheels 121.

Claims 2 and 10 are patentable over Speiser for at least the same reasons as claim 1.

Claim 3 is patentable over Speiser in view of Bednar et al for at least the same reasons as claim 1. Additionally, Bednar et al fails to show a pair of rear wheels having a track width greater than that of the pair of front wheels. Bednar et al fails to show a first row of two cutting units in front of the pair of front wheels and a second row of three cutting units behind the pair of front wheels. Bednar et al fails to show two cutting units in the second row movable to a transport position inside the track width of the pair of rear wheels. Instead, Bednar et al shows rear wheels 16 having a track width less than that of the front wheels 14. Bednar et al shows a first row of three cutting deck assemblies 34 in front of front wheels 14 and a second row of two cutting deck assemblies 152 behind front wheels 14. Cutting deck assemblies 152 are not movable to a transport position inside the track width of rear wheels 16.

Claims 4 - 6 are patentable over Speiser in view of Coldwell for at least the same reasons as claim 1. Additionally, Coldwell fails to show a pair of rear wheels having a track width greater than that of the pair of front wheels. Coldwell fails to show a first row of two cutting units in front of the pair of front wheels and a second row of three cutting units behind the pair of front wheels. Coldwell fails to show two cutting units in the second row movable to a transport position inside the track width of the pair of rear wheels. Instead, Coldwell shows rear wheels 121 having a track width less than that of the front or drive wheels 5. Coldwell shows one rotary cutter 36 in front of the front or drive wheels 5, and two rotary cutters 6 behind the front or drive wheels. Rotary cutters 6 are not movable to a transport position inside the track width of rear wheels 121.

Claims 7 and 9 are patentable over Speiser in view of Christopherson et al for at least the same reasons as claim 1. Additionally, Christopherson et al fails to show a first row of two cutting units in front of the pair of front wheels and a second row of three cutting units behind the pair of front wheels. Christopherson et al fails to show two cutting units in the second row movable to a transport position inside the track

width of the pair of rear wheels. Instead, Christopherson et al shows two mower decks 44' behind front wheels 46, and one mower deck 44 behind rear wheels 54. Mower decks 44' are not movable to a transport position inside the track width of rear wheels 54.

Claim 8 is patentable over Speiser et al in view of Ronning for at least the same reasons as claim 1. Additionally, Roning fails to show a first row of two cutting units in front of the pair of front wheels and a second row of three cutting units behind the pair of front wheels. Roning fails to show two cutting units in the second row movable to a transport position inside the track width of the pair of rear wheels. Instead, Roning shows a first row of two mower units A, B in front of front wheels 15, and a second row of three mower units C, D, E also in front of the front wheels. Mower units C, E are not movable to a transport position inside the track width of rear or traction wheels 12.

Claim 11 is amended to specify a first row of two cutting units and a second row of three cutting units; the rear wheels have a track width; the pivotable arms in the second row are movable to at least two distinct positions; one of the positions holding two of the cutting units in a full vertical position within the track of the rear wheels.

Claim 11 is patentable over Johnson. Johnson fails to show a first row of two cutting units and a second row of three cutting units. Johnson fails to show pivotable arms in the second row movable to at least two distinct positions; one of the positions holding two of the cutting units in a full vertical position within the track of the rear wheels. Instead, Johnson shows a first row with one mower head D and a second row of two mower heads C, C'. Arms 27, 28 and links 79, 80 are movable to hold mower heads C, C' in folded traveling positions, as shown in Figs. 1 and 11, but in the traveling positions the mower heads are not vertical, and they extend outside the track of rear wheels 12.

Claim 12 is patentable over Johnson for at least the same reasons as claim 11.

Claim 13 is patentable over Johnson in view of Worthington '293 for at least the same reasons as claim 11. Worthington '293 fails to show a first row of two cutting units in front of the front wheels and a second row of three cutting units behind the front wheels. Worthington '293 fails to show pivotable arms in the second

row movable to at least two distinct positions; one of the positions holding two of the cutting units in a full vertical position within the track of the rear wheels. Instead, Worthington '293 shows a first row with one cutter reel 22 behind wheels 21 on axis a, and a second row with two cutter reels 22 behind wheels 21 on axis b. Lever arms 39 are not movable to at least two distinct positions; and do not have a position holding two of cutting units 22 in a full vertical position within the track of rear wheels 3.

Claim 14 is patentable over Johnson in view of Roning for at least the same reasons as claim 11. Additionally, Roning fails to show a first row of two cutting units in front of the front wheels and a second row of three cutting units behind the front wheels. Roning fails to show two cutting units in the second row movable to a transport position inside the track of the rear wheels. Instead, Roning shows a first row of two mower units A, B and a second row of three mower units C, D, E in front of front wheels 15. Arms 72-76 are not movable to at least two distinct positions; and do not have a position holding two of the mower units in a full vertical position within the track of rear or traction wheels 12.

Claim 15 is patentable over Johnson for at least the same reasons as claim 11.

Claim 16 is patentable over Johnson in view of Gerzanich for at least the same reasons as claim 11. Additionally, Gerzanich fails to show a first row of two cutting units in front of the front wheels and a second row of three cutting units behind the front wheels. Gerzanich fails to show pivotable arms in the second row movable to at least two distinct positions; one of the positions holding two of the cutting units in a full vertical position within the track of the rear wheels. Instead, Gerzanich shows one cutting head assembly 20 in front of the front wheels. Beams 30, 31 are not movable to at least two distinct positions; and do not have position holding cutting head assembly 20 in a full vertical position within the track of the rear wheels.

Claim 17 is patentable over Johnson in view of Speiser for at least the same reasons as claim 11. Additionally, Speiser fails to show a second row of three cutting units behind the front wheels. Speiser fails to show pivotable arms in the second row movable to at least two distinct positions; one of the positions holding two of the cutting units in a full vertical position within the track of the rear wheels.

Instead, Speiser shows one cutting unit 202 in a second row under frame member 103. As shown in Fig. 11, the arms hold cutting units 200, 201 in a transport position is not full vertical, and extends outside the track width of the rear wheel 130, as well as front wheel 120.

Claim 18 is patentable over Johnson for at least the same reasons as claim 11.

Claim 19 is amended to specify the rear pair of wheels have a greater track width than the front pair of wheels; the first row includes two cutting units in front of the front pair of wheels and the second row includes three cutting units behind the front pair of wheels; each of the cutting units being at least primarily uncovered by the operator module and the power supply in a mowing position, and being within the track width of the rear wheels in a transporting position.

Claim 19 is patentable over Coldwell. Coldwell fails to show the rear pair of wheels having a greater track width than the front pair of wheels. Coldwell fails to show a first row including two cutting units and a second row including three cutting units. Coldwell fails to shows the cutting units being within the track width of the rear wheels in a transporting position. Instead, Coldwell shows rear wheels 121 having a track width less than that of the front or drive wheels 5. Coldwell shows one rotary cutter 36 in front of the front or drive wheels 5, and two rotary cutters 6 behind the front or drive wheels. Rotary cutters 6 are not within the track width of rear wheels 121 in a transporting position.

Claims 20 and 22 are patentable over Coldwell for at least the same reasons as claim 19.

In conclusion, it is believed that this application is in condition for allowance, and such allowance is respectfully requested.

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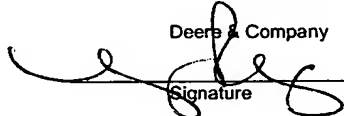


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